

Remarks

Claims 1-4, 7-13, 15-18, and 58-69 are currently pending. Claims 1, 2, 58, and 62 have been amended. Claims 21 and 22 have been cancelled. Reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested of all the pending claims in light of the following remarks.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to clarify the pivoting and lateral movement permitted between the components and therefore the rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §112 should be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-4, 7, 13, 15-16, and 58-68 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0135277 to Bryan, et al. ("Bryan").

The PTO provides in MPEP § 2131 that

"[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim...."

Therefore, with respect to claims 1-4, 7, 13, 15-16, 21, 22, and 58-68, to sustain this rejection Bryan must contain all of the elements of the claims. However, Bryan does not teach all elements of independent claims 1, 58, and 62. The elements of cancelled claim 22 have been incorporated into the independent claims, and the Applicant notes that the Office Action provided no specific reason for rejecting claims 21 and 22 with the Bryan reference. Bryan, for example, does not teach "a first circumferential groove for coupling with a complementary first circumferential ridge of the first end portion" as recited in amended claim 1. Therefore, the rejection of independent claims 1, 58, and 62 is not supported by the Bryan reference and should be withdrawn. Claims 2-4, 7-13, 15-18, and 59-61, and 63-69 depend from and further limit the independent claims and are therefore also in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

It is clear from all of the foregoing that independent claims 1, 58, and 62 are in condition for allowance. Dependent claims 2-4, 7-13, 15-18, 59-61, and 63-69 depend from and further limit the independent claims and therefore are allowable as well. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the numbers provided below if further consideration is required.

Respectfully submitted,



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